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University of Montana–Missoula. Office of University Relations, "Representative John Melcher to speak at University Wednesday" (1973). *University of Montana News Releases, 1928, 1956-present*. 26236.
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IMMEDIATELY

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localREP. JOHN MELCHER TO SPEAK
AT UNIVERSITY WEDNESDAY

MISSOULA--

Rep. John Melcher, D-Mont., will be keynote speaker Wednesday (Feb. 14) at the weekly Coal Field Forum at the University of Montana.

The program, which is open to the public without charge, will begin at 8 p.m. in the University Center Ballroom. The discussion is one in a series sponsored jointly by the UM Environmental Studies Program and the Program Council of the Associated Students of UM.

During Wednesday's program, which is entitled "A Conversation with Rep. John Melcher," the Eastern District congressman will discuss federal legislation involving strip mining, energy conversion processes and other aspects of federal energy policy. Melcher's introductory remarks will be followed by questions and comments from the audience.

Melcher was leader in the House of Representatives last session in producing a strong strip mining reclamation bill. That bill died in conference at the end of the session but is being reintroduced this session.

Sen. Mike Mansfield, D-Mont., has given the reclamation bill high priority in the Senate, according to Dr. Robert McKelvey, UM mathematics professor, who is coordinator of the coal field series.

Regarding his talk Wednesday, Melcher said he favors "a tough national reclamation law that would guarantee successful reclamation before coal strip mining was started in an area."

"Where reclamation cannot be completely successful, the law must prohibit coal strip mining," he emphasized.

Melcher has been a member of the House Interior Committee and recently was appointed chairman of the Subcommittee on Public Lands.

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